

Glossary

Alliteration: The repetition of the same sounds or of the same kinds of sounds at the beginning of words in a sentence, a group of words, or a line of poetry (e.g., the “P” in Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.”)

Alphabetic Principle: The ability to associate sounds with letters and use those sounds to form words. It is the way in which western languages in general use letters to stand for phonemes, thereby creating an unlimited quantity of words that can be constructed out of the relatively small set of letters.

Approaches to Learning: The inclinations, dispositions, attitudes, habits, and styles that reflect the many ways that children involve themselves in learning.

Caregiver: A parent, guardian, teacher or consistent significant adult who is responsible for providing direct care, teaching, and nurture to one or more children.

Cognitive Development: The development of knowledge, understanding about basic concepts, natural phenomena, and social interactions and functions, and skills, which help children think about and understand the world around them.

Comprehension: The understanding of oral and written language, heavily dependent upon word knowledge or vocabulary, that results from the child’s active construction of meaning.

Creativity and Inventiveness: Characterized by originality, fluency, flexibility, and the ability to extend existing knowledge, using imagination and moving beyond conventional thinking.

Dance Arts: An artistic form of nonverbal communication in which movement communicates feelings and needs, self-expression, and creativity.

Data Collection and Analysis: The gathering, organizing, and analyzing of information, enabling one to make sense of phenomena in the environment.

Domain: A broad category or dimension of children’s learning and development.

Early Intervention: A program aimed at enhancing the development of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers, particularly those with special needs. Early intervention may include education, family support, and nutritional and health services.

Early Writing: The ability to express or to communicate in writing (using both the motor and cognitive elements of language) as developed through the skills of drawing, scribbling, and the use of invented spelling.

Empathy: The ability to recognize, respond, and share in another’s emotions, thoughts or feelings.

Example: Defines what a child is doing to demonstrate he is acquiring the knowledge, skills, and/or attitudes toward learning addressed in the specific indicator.

Expressive Vocabulary: Vocalizing, speaking, or indicating through sign language not just knowledge and understanding of a word but also expressing or using a word.

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Fine Arts: Includes the dance arts, music, theatre arts, and visual arts through which young children develop independence, self-esteem, and self-expression and through which they integrate other domains, such as mathematics, science, cultural histories, language, and social cooperation.

Fine Motor Development: The ability to coordinate smaller muscles in the arms, hands, and fingers, such as through grasping, cutting with scissors, or fastening buttons.

Gross Motor Development: The movements of the entire body or large portions of the body, including the abilities to roll over, walk, run, jump, hop, skip, and climb.

Head Start: A comprehensive child development program, funded by the federal government and administered by local organizations, that serves low-income preschool-aged children and their families with the overall goal of increasing school readiness and improving development and learning outcomes.

Head Start Child Outcomes Framework: The early learning standards that guide Head Start pedagogy and curriculum.

Health and Well-Being: The general condition of the body and mind promoted through good personal hygiene and basic personal care practices, eating a variety of nutritious foods, rest and recuperation, and an awareness of basic health and safety rules.

Indicator: A general statement that indicates the knowledge, skills, and/or attitudes toward learning that a child may exhibit during a given developmental stage.

Individual Education Plan (IEP): A written education plan for a preschool or school-aged child with disabilities developed by a team of professionals (teachers, therapists, etc.) and the child's parents. IEP's are based on a multidisciplinary evaluation of the child (age 2-

21 years) and describe how the child is presently doing, what the child's learning needs are, and what services the child will need. They are reviewed and updated yearly. IEP's are required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). For children ages birth through 2 years, an IFSP is written.

Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP): A document that guides the early intervention process for children with developmental delays and disabilities (birth through age two) and their families. The IFSP is the means for the implementation of effective early intervention in accordance with Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). It contains information about the supports and services necessary to facilitate a child's development and enhance the family's capacity to facilitate the child's development. Through the IFSP process, family members and service providers work as a team to plan, implement, and evaluate services tailored to the family's unique concerns, priorities, and resources.

Initiative and Curiosity: Characterized by a sense of inquisitiveness, interest in pursuing new information, keenness for new knowledge, and desire to learn.

Inventive Writing: The child's application of his/her knowledge of letters and their sounds to create words that are not necessarily spelled correctly.

Language and Literacy: Developed through the construction of meaning and structure of words and sentences; how to use words to convey meaning; and how to understand and use printed materials.

Listening and Speaking: Awareness of the social conventions of language usage, and the ability to listen, to understand, and to follow verbal conversation, including the ability to integrate verbal and non-verbal cues that inform interpretation related to social and emotional contexts.

Glossary (continued)

Measurement Skills: The ability to determine the size, volume, quantity, and other measurable properties, and awareness of and ability to use the appropriate tools to do so.

Music: An avenue through which children may express thoughts, feelings, and energy through finger plays, simple instruments, or humming or singing along to a familiar song.

Non-standard Measurement: A unit of measure whose values may vary such as a person's foot length, paper clips, paces, or blocks. It is unlike a standard unit of measure, such as inch or pound, whose values do not vary.

Numbers and Operations: Entails building understanding of the concept of numbers, quantity, ways of representing numbers, one-to-one correspondence, and counting.

One-to-one Correspondence: Describes a mathematical set of objects such that one object can be paired with another object from another set, leaving no remainder (e.g., four napkins with four plates).

Patterns: Planned or random repetitions of events, colors, lines, values, textures, and sound, including pitch, timbre, volume, and other qualities.

Persistence: Continued attentiveness that indicates the ability to retain meaningful information and ideas for use in future activities and situations.

Phonemes: The smallest units of spoken language that combine to form words (e.g., the word hat is made up of three phonemes, h-a-t).

Phonics: The association of letters with the speech sounds they represent, rather than visual recognition of the whole word as a unit.

Phonology/Phonological Awareness: The ability to notice and to work explicitly with the basic units of sound and to understand how they affect the meaning of words. Phonological awareness activities can involve work with alliteration, rhymes, and separating individual syllables into sounds.

Physical Attribute: The size, color, shape, texture, or physical composition of materials and objects.

Physical Development and Health: Healthy physical development occurs along a relatively predictable sequence, with good health practices fostering the knowledge and skills needed to thrive physically, mentally, emotionally, and socially.

Play: Spontaneous and joyful activity performed for its intrinsic reward and concerned more often with means than with ends. Children of all cultures play; games vary according to cultural traditions and socialization practices.

Print Awareness and Concepts: The construction of meaning from print, including skills such as print convention and directionality, and a child's knowledge of the principles and rules that govern text (and to some extent pictures) in a particular language.

Reasoning and Problem-Solving: The ability to understand, evaluate, and interpret and apply knowledge and information, processes which inform future learning and problem-solving.

Receptive Vocabulary: Understanding words without necessarily being able to speak or express them. Receptive vocabulary precedes expressive vocabulary.

Glossary (continued)

Relationship with Others: The ability to form and to maintain relationships, to negotiate interactions in a positive manner, to develop pro-social behaviors, such as empathy, respect, and sensitivity, to interpret behavior in differing social contexts, and to perceive expectations across social groups through ever-widening experiences.

Scientific Inquiry and Exploration: The processes through which children apply and test their scientific knowledge, including sensory observations, asking questions, and data collection and analysis.

Scientific Knowledge: Understanding of and information about the earth and living things, including their relationships and interdependencies.

Scribble: A common writing stroke (e.g., a horizontal or vertical line, point, circle, spiral, zig-zag line, wavy line) used to approximate letters.

Self-Efficacy: An individual's belief about their capabilities to produce designated levels of performance that exercise influence over events that affect their lives. Self-efficacy beliefs determine how people feel, think, motivate themselves and behave and can enhance accomplishments and personal well-being.

Self-Perceptions: Knowledge and beliefs about one's own characteristics, strengths, and weaknesses; judgments and feelings about one's value and worth; beliefs about one's competence in specific areas; and a developing sense of choice and purpose about one's roles and activities.

Self-Regulation: The ability to enhance and maintain emotional well-being and the effective foundation for social relationships across the life-span by understanding, appropriately expressing, and learning to manage one's emotional perceptions and responses.

Social and Emotional Development: The systematic changes in social relationships, self-perceptions, and understanding and managing or regulating emotions in both personal and social contexts.

Spatial Sense: Acquiring an understanding of the physical relationship (i.e., direction and position) between self and objects, or between two or more objects, in one's environment.

Standard Measuring Tools: Rulers, yardsticks, scales, thermometers, to measure length, height, weight, temperature, and other properties.

Strand: A general facet of learning and development within a domain. Several strands make up a domain.

Strategy: A suggested learning activity or interactive approach for adults to help children develop toward desired indicators and goals.

Temperament: An individual's typical manner of responding to the environment, including his/her activity level, emotional intensity, and attention span.

Theatre Arts: Includes dramatic play through which children engage in imitation and acting out social roles, experiences, and fantasy in creative and imaginative ways.

Virginia's Foundation Blocks of Early Learning: A set of minimum standards in literacy, mathematics, science, and history and social science with indicators of success for entering kindergarten based on scientifically-based research.

Visual Arts: The exploration and creation of works of art during which young children acquire important basic concepts such as color, line, shape, texture, pattern, and space.

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